Muscatine Nov 12 186[illegible]

My ever Dear cousin

Though thy kind letter has remained so long unanswered it is not because it was not very acceptable or because thou wert forgotten, for I often think of thee in thy loneliness, but as I ever consider the 'widow and fatherless' peculiar objects of our Heavenly Fathers care, (especially those who put their trust in him) I trust thou experiences his sustaining Arm to be underneath & around about thee to support thee in thy trials, and his Holy Spirit near to comfort thee in thy afflictions

Let us ever bear in mind dear cousin that He whose mercies are over all his works does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men; but for the benign purpose of drawing them nearer to himself that he may happify us, and that every chastisement whether

It would be a matter of satisfaction to me to know how the transactions of Henry and Father have affected the minds of some few, for instance thyself Uncle A & Wm Dean not that I wished thee to inquire, but perhaps thou hast heard remarks from which thou couldst draw conclusions for I do not feel exactly as James Chase expressed to Henry, after having had a long talk with Wm Thompson upon the subject, who expressed to him that friends were satisfied with Henrys proceedings, giving him fully to understand they did not consider he had done anything wrong in it J C said to Henry we need not care what folks a thousand miles off thought about as long as those here were satisfied, that is the meaning if not his words We expect Uncle Joseph to spend sometime with us I trust it will be a rich feast I must close in haste in love to all

affectionately J H M

Please write very soon

inward or outward is an indication of our Heavenly Fathers love. How very desireable it is to become firmly estab-lished upon the immutable Rock, against which no storms ever did prevail; then shall we have a reffuge to flee too in times of trouble and a covert from the storms and tempests

I suppose thou art as well and perhaps better informed respecting the destitution in Kansas than we are, are any of thy family there, and doest thou get any information from private correspondance and, what, I mean respecting the famine, It may truly be hoped the troubles in the political world will work out some good but what the result will be is only known to Him who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, the aspect just now looks dark and threatning but we must endeavor to hope for the best and put our trust in a stronger arm than ~~bone of~~ human flesh

We have thus a lovely winter thus far the thermometer has not been below 22° I think below zero, sleighing good and not a great deal of high wind.

Ellen is in town attending school, were she at home she would doubtless write to cousin Ann, I think she has spoken about it several times, when thou writes, which I hope will be soon, I hope she will write to Ellen

We luxuriate in sweet made by our own free hands, and of a fine quality, we have plenty of molasses that is beautifully graining, the dificulty now seems to be to separate the sugar from the molasses, we are not initiated in that art yet fully, though we have drained some but it mostly seems inclined to pack or adhere together if pressed I think steaming rectifies that measureably — the molasses answers nearly if not quite every purpose